

# FAR SOUTHWEST

## DEVELOPMENT AREA

Department of Development and Planning



City of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, Mayor

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# Far Southwest Development Area

City of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, Mayor

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## PURPOSE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AREA REPORTS

The Development Area reports have been prepared to inform Chicago citizens of the meaning of the *Comprehensive Plan's* recommendations for each area of the city, to aid in the exchange of information about community needs between citizens and government that is necessary to the development of a cooperative planning process, and to facilitate the co-ordination of plans and programs for community improvements. There are 16 Development Areas, covering the entire city, each with a population of 150,000 to 300,000 people and with a land area of 6 to 20 square miles.

The Development Area reports suggest land use changes, residential and industrial improvements, transportation improvements and community facilities and social programs needed to achieve the goals of the *Comprehensive Plan* in each area. The reports are intended to stimulate community discussion of issues, problems, and solutions. This discussion will lead to formulation of a planning framework for each area to be used by government and citizens for scheduling and co-ordinating programs and community improvements.

The various kinds of projects that the city undertakes need to be co-ordinated if they are to produce maximum benefits for the communities they serve. Experience has demonstrated that Chicago is too large to deal with as a whole in co-ordinating and scheduling specific projects. Thus, the Development Areas represent a very practical means of focusing the planning process on localized needs and conditions while remaining within the context of city-wide *Comprehensive Plan* policies and goals.

The recommendations in the Development Area reports are ideas and suggestions for consideration. They do not represent final plans for the areas, nor do they cover all issues. The reports recognize that not all planning problems have clear or immediate solutions and in some cases, questions are raised in the expectation that the best solution will evolve only through community discussion.

### The Review Process

Four steps will be followed in reviewing and

revising the Development Area reports:

—Each Development Area report will be distributed to civic organizations and other private groups, both within the local area and city-wide.

—Representatives of city agencies will meet with groups and individuals in each area to discuss the report. Findings will be modified, other ideas sought, and approaches to resolving issues will be explored.

—Appropriate revisions in the proposals will then be made which will result in a planning framework for the Development Area. After public discussion, the planning framework will be adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission as a policy guide in reviewing projects and programs for the area.

—Using the planning framework as a guide the Department of Development and Planning will work with other agencies to modify and co-ordinate programs and projects to meet the area's critical needs and to achieve local objectives.

Chicago is constantly changing. Therefore, from time to time, each planning framework will be reviewed and adjusted or amended to reflect new needs or changes in objectives as they are identified in the continuing process of planning.

### From Plans to Action

In recent years new transportation facilities, urban renewal, and other public and private developments have greatly improved the city's appearance and livability, and the opportunities and capabilities of its people. Still greater effort and further improvement will be necessary if Chicago is to meet its commitment to the strategic objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*. In the coming years sections of the city must be rebuilt or rehabilitated to meet the rising expectations for living standards of all its people. New ways must be found for meeting social concerns, for strengthening capabilities and for broadening opportunities. Achieving the kind of city envisioned in the *Comprehensive Plan* will call for the ideas, widespread support, and involvement of all of the people of Chicago.

## FAR SOUTHWEST DEVELOPMENT AREA

The Far Southwest Development Area is irregular in shape, bounded on the west by the city limits, on the south by 75th and 77th streets, on the east by Western and Central Park avenues and Garfield Boulevard, and on the north by industries and institutions on the north side of the Sanitary and Ship Canal.

The Development Area covers 17 of the city's 227 square miles and includes the entire community areas of Brighton Park, Archer Heights, Garfield Ridge, Clearing, West Lawn and West Elsdon and the southern section of Gage Park.

Much of the Far Southwest was originally swamp and marshland. Despite the real estate speculation and land sub-division in the nineteenth century which followed the construction of rail lines, Archer Avenue, and the Sanitary and Ship Canal, poor drainage and low accessibility discouraged extensive settlement until the early 1900's. In the Brighton Park community, however, industrial development began in the 1870's and attracted working men and their families.

The construction of mainline and belt railroads through the Far Southwest was the major stimulus to industrial growth in all parts of the Development Area, and residential growth quickly followed industrial development.

By 1910 substantial settlements had begun in all the Far Southwest communities. However, the rate of residential growth differed widely from community to community. The northeastern portion of the Development Area, comprising the Brighton Park, Gage Park and Archer Heights communities, was a mature residential area by 1930. These communities are medium density residential areas of single-family, two-flat and small apartment buildings. Housing has begun to show some signs of deterioration in these communities, but the general level of deterioration remains lower than the city-wide level.

The population of the Development Area in 1960 was largely of foreign extraction with a very small percentage of non-whites. Persons in the northeastern communities were generally older and had less formal

education. Families were smaller with lower median annual incomes than in the other communities of the Far Southwest.

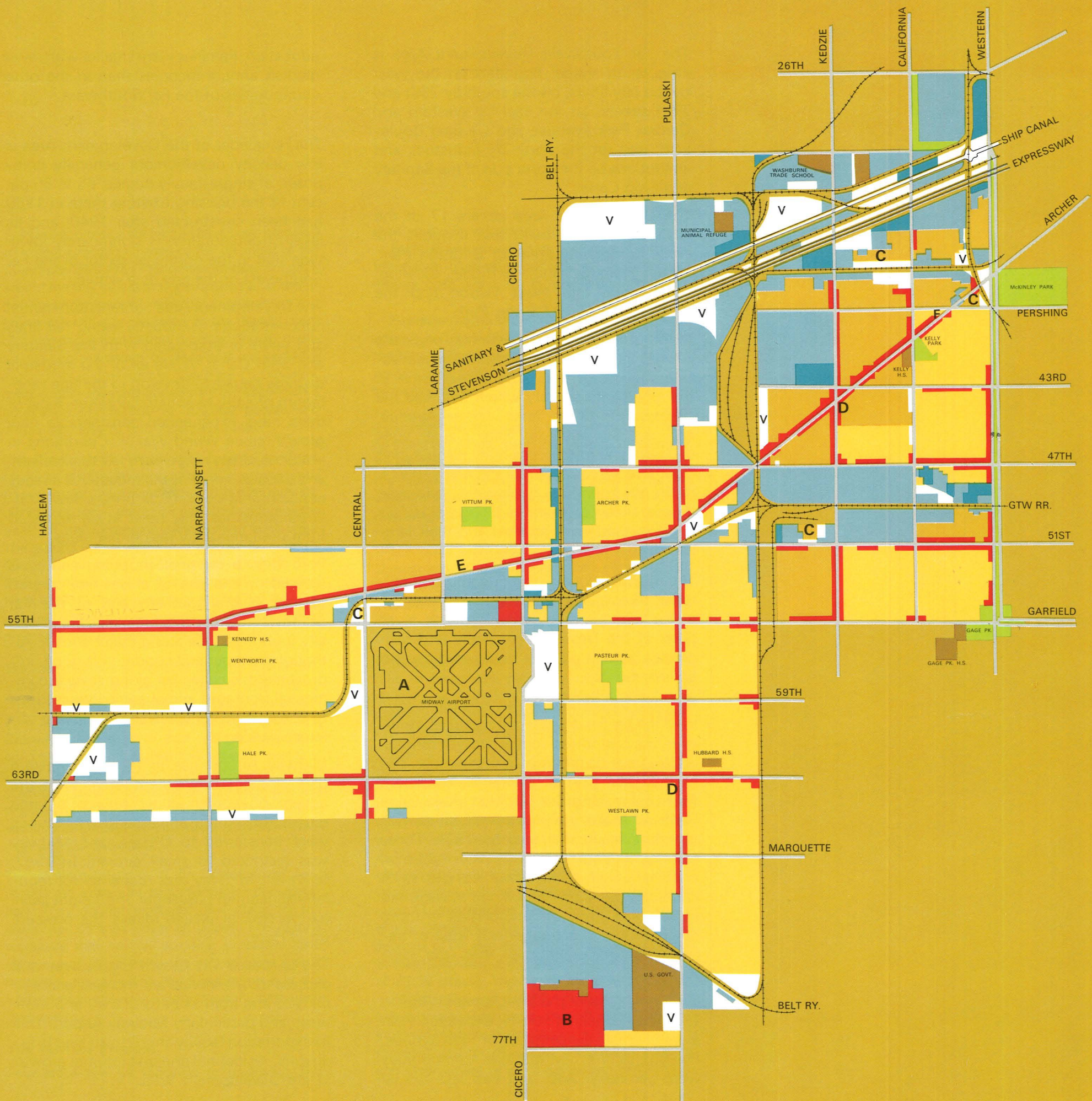
The remainder of the Development Area is low-density development generally composed of single-family homes. 65 to 85 per cent of the housing existing there in 1960 had been constructed after 1940, and its level of deterioration is significantly lower than that in the northeast sector of the Far Southwest or the city as a whole.

The Development Area contains substantial concentrations of industry along rail lines and yards or associated with the Sanitary and Ship Canal. While all of the industrial districts began to develop in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, most of them have experienced considerable new growth since World War II. Conditions in industrial areas range from fair to excellent, and because most of the industry is already concentrated in districts only a few scattered industries may need to be relocated from predominantly residential areas.

Ford City, a regional shopping center, is located on the site of a war-time aircraft factory at the southern end of the Far Southwest. Other retail facilities are generally found in strips along major streets. Although their general condition is good, improvement is called for along several commercial frontages and at some intersections to consolidate activities and to provide off-street parking.

Midway Airport lies in the southwestern part of the Development Area. With the advent of regular jet air service in large planes, most of the air passenger operations were transferred to O'Hare, and Midway was restricted to small aircraft. In 1967, however, Midway was reopened for regularly scheduled passenger and freight service on smaller jets to relieve the pressure on O'Hare.

The proposed Crosstown Expressway and express transit service will increase accessibility to and from all parts of the Far Southwest, and particularly Midway Airport. This transportation facility should also lead to industrial, residential and institutional growth in the Development Area.



## Planning Framework

### Characteristics Far Southwest Development Area

Residence in Good Condition	
Residence in Need of Some Improvement	
Residence in Need of Major Repair	
Business Concentration	
Industry in Good Condition	
Industry in Need of Some Improvement	
Park	
Institution	

**A** Midway Airport

**B** Ford City Shopping Complex

**C** Adverse Mixture of Land Use

**D** Obsolete Commerical Pattern

**E** Diagonal Street

**F** Housing and Environmental Problems

**V** Significant Vacant Parcels

### Objectives

*The Comprehensive Plan of Chicago* makes proposals which are designed to improve the quality of life in the city through a wide range of actions directed toward both human welfare and physical order. The following specific planning objectives for the Far Southwest Development Area are addressed to this end:

1. Maintain residential areas of high quality and increase the supply of standard housing on the basis of full and equal opportunity for all residents. Improve deteriorated housing and encourage the use of high standards of design in new construction.
2. Increase the quality and availability of necessary social programs, including care for children, planned activities for the elderly, community center facilities and programs for the area's youth.
3. Provide high quality school and library facilities to assure educational opportunities for all residents and to fulfill city-wide educational objectives.
4. Increase the quantity of easily accessible local parks and improve the quality of existing parks. Relate new recreation spaces to educational facilities. Expand year-round facilities and provide more extensive indoor recreational programs to encourage park use by all community residents.

5. Modernize fire and police facilities to provide greater efficiency. Emphasize prevention programs through cooperation with citizens and private organizations. Expand programs designed to control air and water pollution.

6. Consolidate strips of commercial development along major streets into business centers. Locate community services, including health centers and library branches, in business centers to create focal points of community activity.

7. Prevent deterioration of presently well-maintained industrial concentrations. Emphasize industrial park complexes for future industrial development. Encourage relocation of industry which creates adverse conditions for surrounding residential neighborhoods.

8. Improve major streets to reduce congestion and remove unwanted traffic from residential streets. Improve transportation facilities through the construction of the Crosstown Expressway and the continued improvement of Midway Airport. Support the consolidation of rail facilities and the reduction of rail lines through the community. Remove grade-level railroad crossings on major streets.

## Existing Conditions and Recommendations

### Population Characteristics

The 1960 population of the Far Southwest Development Area, 166,361, represented about five per cent of the city's total. Almost one-half of it was of first or second generation foreign extraction, as compared to the city-wide average of 36 per cent. The predominant nationalities represented were Polish, Czech, German and Italian. Negroes comprised only 2.5 per cent of the Far Southwest's population in 1960, and almost all of them lived in the LeClaire Courts housing project near the Stevenson Expressway and Cicero Avenue. Recent estimates of the 1966 population suggest that there has been a slight increase in the non-white population in the northern parts of the Development Area.

The working population throughout the Development Area is predominantly in blue-collar occupations, the communities ranging from 66 to 73 per cent blue-collar in 1960 compared with the city-wide average of 63 per cent.

In comparison to 1960 city-wide figures, the Far Southwest Development Area had higher percentages of children of school age or younger and of persons over 65 years of age, and equal or higher median family incomes. Conversely, it had a smaller percentage of families with incomes of less than \$3000 annually, a lower birth rate, and lower rates of juvenile delinquency, mental illness and welfare reciprocity.

Residential mobility was lower (measured by the percentage of people over 5 years of age in 1960 who lived in a different home in 1955) for the Far Southwest Development Area than for the city as a whole. The communities in the northeast corner have even lower residential mobility than the remainder of the Development Area.

### Residence

The Far Southwest Development Area is a low density part of the city with predominantly single-family homes and two-flats. In 1960, the Development Area contained 49,300 housing units accommodating 166,400 persons. Only thirteen per cent of the residential structures contain three or more housing units. Almost 50 per cent of the area's structures had been built since 1940, and only eight per cent were considered deficient in 1960.<sup>1</sup> The city-wide figures for these 1960 housing characteristics show that 56 per cent of the residential structures had three or more units, only 15 per cent of them had been built since 1940, and 23 per cent of them were deficient.

Two-thirds of the units, or twice the city-wide level, are owner-occupied. The majority of the units are relatively large, containing five or more rooms, and the number of persons per household, 3.7 in 1960, was considerably larger than the city-wide average of 2.6.

Areas	Population	Housing Units	Percent Deficient	Percent Owner Occupied
TOTAL	166,361	49,299	7.48	68.6
Garfield Ridge	40,499	10,865	4.06	82.2
West Elsdon	14,215	4,177	4.26	84.2
West Lawn	26,910	7,922	6.00	82.6
Clearing	18,797	5,465	5.50	74.6
Brighton Park	38,019	12,499	12.22	45.3
Gage Park (part)	14,366	4,768	10.23	59.9
Archer Heights	10,584	3,309	6.22	64.6
Remainder	2,971	294	24.15	41.1

The development area is relatively homogeneous in its residential quality. Nevertheless, there are contrasts within the area which stem largely from differences in the age of communities and their populations.

The oldest parts of the Far Southwest Development Area are in the northeast from Western Avenue to the Santa Fe Railroad between the northern boundary of the Development Area and Garfield Boulevard. Eighty-five per cent of residential units in the Brighton Park and Gage Park communities were built before 1940 and over fifty per cent before 1920. In spite of their age and frame construction, the deficiency rates have been relatively low. High levels of maintenance have contributed to the preservation of the housing stock. However, as the housing continues to age the need for maintenance will grow more critical.

<sup>1</sup>Deficient housing units include the following census categories: sound units lacking some or all plumbing facilities, all deteriorating and dilapidated units.

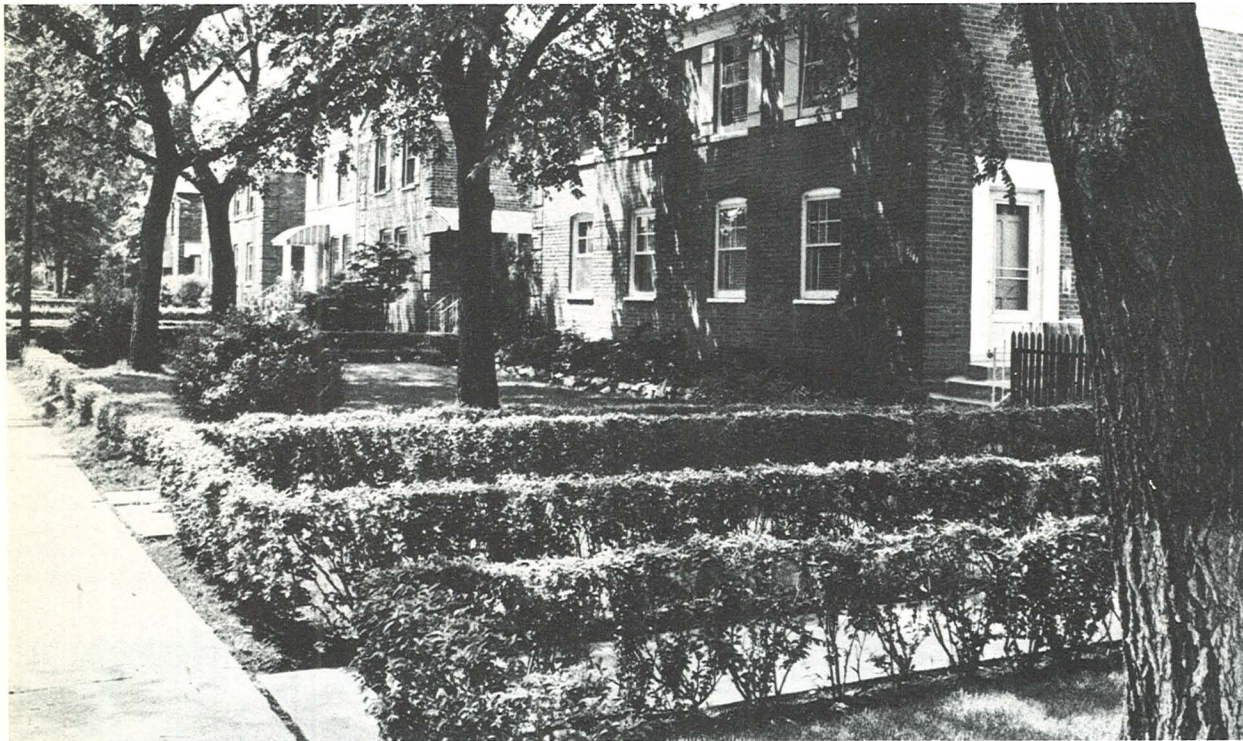
The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends the Brighton Park community as a rehabilitation and maintenance area. Private initiative reinforced by intensified code enforcement and improved provision of community facilities could improve the residential environment and make the community more attractive, particularly for younger families.



Many of the houses in the eastern and central parts of the Far Southwest have been excellently maintained. However, as the housing stock continues to age, the need for maintenance will become more critical.

The central section of the development area from the Santa Fe Railroad to the Belt Railroad between the industrial areas in the north and the south is slightly newer than the northeastern section, only ten per cent of housing units having been constructed before 1920 and 37 per cent before 1940. The neighborhoods in this section have two-story brick buildings and mature trees, giving them a well-established character. On the average, only five per cent of dwellings are deficient, and standards of community maintenance are high.

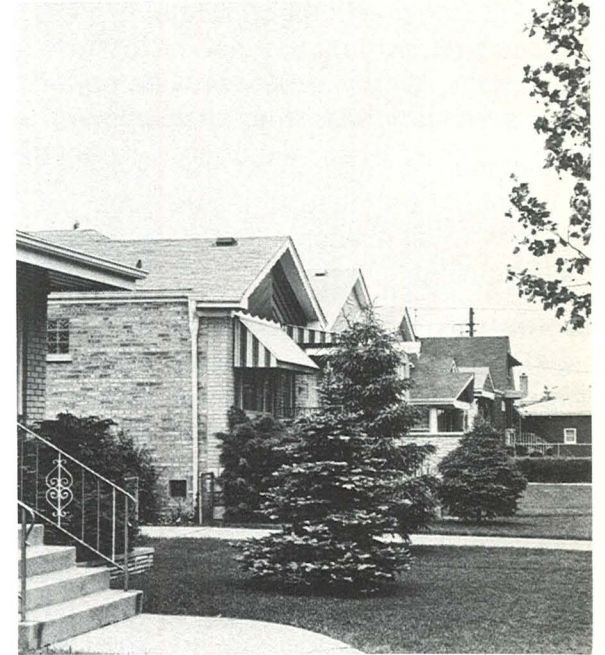
The western section is the most recently developed portion of the Far Southwest. To the south of Midway Airport an older subdivision surrounds Lawler Park with two-story houses, high arching trees and rather narrow streets, giving the neighborhood a cohesiveness and identity which is often lacking in newer areas. The remainder of



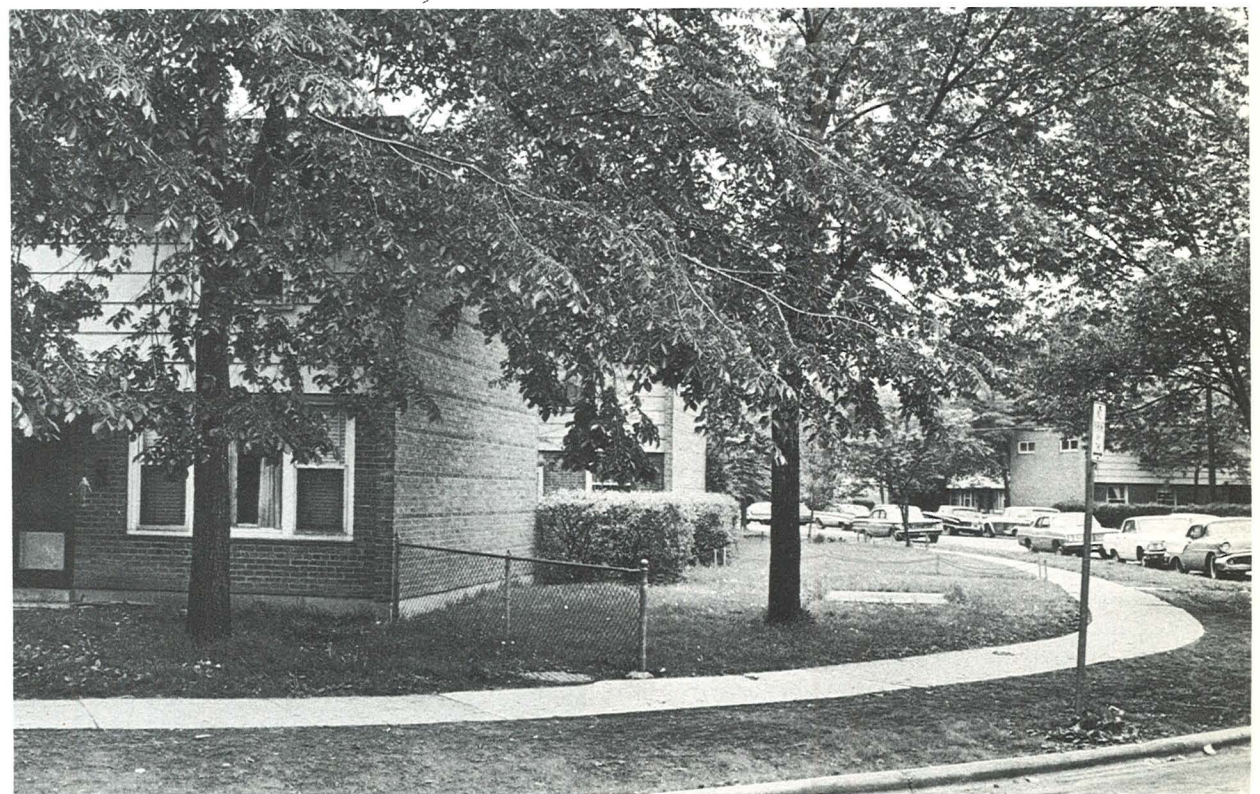
Lawler Park, in the southwestern section of the Development Area, is an interesting development of pleasant single family homes surrounding a small park.

the section contains mainly single-story homes. The 1960 census showed that 84 per cent of all units were less than 20 years old. New construction has continued, with over six hundred building permits issued in Garfield Ridge between 1962 and 1966. Approximately eighty per cent of all units in this area were owner-occupied in 1960. The level of deficient housing, with the exception of a small area to the north and east of the airport, averages five per cent.

The Garfield Ridge community contains the only public housing project in the Far Southwest. LeClaire Courts, located at Cicero Avenue and the Stevenson Expressway, is a two-story row house development occupied by the majority of the development area's Negro population. This project is an example of attractively designed and well laid out public housing.



The western part of the Far Southwest contains sections of new single family homes typified by this street.



LeClaire Courts is a well designed public housing development of single family row-housing.

The *Comprehensive Plan* identifies the western and central sections of the Far Southwest as areas where normal maintenance and new private construction will be adequate to assure good housing quality.

The *Comprehensive Plan* suggests that areas close to transit and commuter stops, or to expressway access points, might be gradually developed with housing of higher densities than that of the surrounding areas. Several sites within the new Crosstown Expressway corridor would provide opportunities for such intensified development.

In this area, as throughout the city, every effort should be made to insure equal opportunity to all residents in obtaining adequate housing.

### Recreation

The Far Southwest Development Area contains approximately 153 acres of recreational land. 108 acres are owned or leased by the Chicago Park District, and an additional 45 acres adjacent to or surrounding school facilities are owned by the Board of Education. This amounts to 0.9 acres per thousand residents, less than the 1.6 city-wide ratio, and considerably less than the two acres per thousand minimum recommended by the *Comprehensive Plan*. 179 acres of new park land would be necessary to raise the acreage ratio to the *Comprehensive Plan* target of two acres per thousand residents.

The twelve parks in the Far Southwest range in size from a quarter acre playlot to 16.75 acres, with five parks being over twelve acres. Only three parks—a total of 8.4 acres—are located east of Pulaski Road. One regional park, Marquette, and two large neighborhood parks, McKinley and Gage, adjoin the Development Area on its eastern border and provide some recreational space for the Area's residents east of Pulaski Road. Priority should be given to this section in Park District land acquisition plans for the Far Southwest Development Area.

All of the larger parks have athletic fields and recreation, crafts, or club rooms either on the park site or in an adjacent building. Hale, Kelly, Pasteur, Vittum, and Wentworth parks also offer indoor drama and artcraft programs. Indoor recreational activities should be expanded to create further involvement of the community with the facilities available to it.

The Chicago Park District and Board of Education have adopted the principle of joint park-school development: locating parks and schools on adjacent sites to permit the combined use of public buildings and recreational space. This cooperative program provides needed gymnasium facilities for park use and provides additional open space near school yards.

In the Far Southwest, the cooperative program for Kelly Park and Kelly High School includes the use of the school's swimming pool for Park District programs. West Lawn Park and Lee Elementary School provide an excellent example of a workable school-park arrangement. Lawler Park is an example of a well designed and located community park. Surrounded on all sides by single-family homes, the park is shielded from street traffic at all but two points and is highly accessible to pedestrians.

Combination school-park sites such as this one provide increased recreation space for schools and an economical use of a limited park area.

The 1967-1971 *Joint Capital Improvements Program* lists improvements such as lighting, walks, all purpose play areas, baseball bleachers, tennis courts and the acquisition and development of a nine-acre park at 59th and Central avenues in the Development Area.

Many parks in the Far Southwest Development Area are largely sports fields with only peripheral areas where landscaping provides for more passive forms of recreation. In describing local parks, the *Comprehensive Plan* states that "landscaped areas would provide people of all ages with pleasant places to relax, or stroll through their community". Redesigning portions of many of these parks would make the existing acreage attractive to more of the area's residents.



Lawler Park contains a variety of indoor and outdoor activities in a space which relates to the single-family homes which surround it on all sides and allows for safe, easily supervised play.



## Education

In 1967, 13,200 elementary and 10,500 high school students were enrolled in public schools in the Far Southwest Development Area. Parochial schools enrolled an additional 14,400 elementary and 1,900 high school students. There was no significant increase in public elementary school enrollments between 1965 and 1967, but public high school enrollments increased by 20 per cent.

There are seventeen public elementary schools, five elementary classroom branches, one upper grade center and one school for the physically handicapped. Secondary school facilities include three general high schools, two high school branches and one vocational high school. Ten of the Far Southwest's public elementary schools and branches are overcrowded according to the Board of Education standard for overcrowding—33 or more pupils per classroom. Additional facilities are needed to reduce class size to the more desirable level of 30 pupils per classroom.

The increase in high school enrollment is expected to continue through the 1970's, and is likely to be greatest in the newer residential areas west of Midway Airport. Kennedy High School, which is currently operating at twice its capacity, uses ten classrooms at nearby Kinzie Elementary School, but even more space is needed. Hubbard and Kelly high schools are also operating at more than 100 per cent capacity and are in need of more classroom space.

The enrollment of Washburne Trade School is made up of apprentices from a variety of trade unions. The Board of Education has been concerned with the underrepresentation of minority groups in the classes at Washburne and has begun to study the problem.

The *1967-1971 Joint Capital Improvements Program* includes planning funds for six new elementary schools in the Far Southwest. It also includes funds for additions to Hubbard and Kennedy high schools and for planning a new high school in the vicinity of Pulaski Road and Archer Avenue to relieve overcrowding at both Kelly and Kennedy high schools. A revised program is now under study by the Board of Education that may result in alternative proposals and changes in priorities.

Racial integration in the schools is an issue

of great importance in achieving city-wide quality education. Because of the general pattern of segregation in housing, many of the schools are also segregated. Such a pattern seriously limits the possibility of raising the achievement level of disadvantaged students, of whom a disproportionate number are members of minority groups. A national study has stated that "racial isolation in the schools also fosters attitudes and behavior that perpetuate isolation in other areas of American life".<sup>2</sup>

Extensions of two programs which have been initiated elsewhere in the city could help to reduce racial isolation. The Board of Education has instituted a voluntary busing program permitting students from overcrowded schools which are becoming re-segregated to attend less crowded, all-white schools. Another program, Project Wingspread, permits interchange between Chicago and suburban students.

Consideration is now being given to sites near the Crosstown Expressway for the construction of a new junior college. Such a site would bring the city one step closer to creating a dispersed pattern of higher education facilities.

### Libraries

The Far Southwest Development Area is now served by five library branches in rented facilities and two traveling libraries. The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends that library-owned facilities be available within a one mile radius of all residents. In late summer, 1968, construction is scheduled to begin on a new Brighton Park branch library.

Gaps in service exist in the Far Southwest with some areas serviced only by a traveling branch. Facilities should be increased to strengthen the overall library system servicing the Far Southwest.

The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends that new branches be located in or near business centers because of the increased use of library facilities placed in centers of community activity.

Kennedy High School, although relatively new, is currently overcrowded. Provision of more school facilities should be a priority concern in the rapidly growing residential area which it serves.



<sup>2</sup>United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Racial Isolation in the Public Schools*, Vol. 1, p. 110.

## Social Programs

With the exception of Brighton Park, the Far Southwest Development Area is identified by the *Comprehensive Plan* as an area of low priority in the provision of public health care facilities. Brighton Park, with the Development Area's lowest median income and greatest health problems, is designated by the *Comprehensive Plan* as an area of second priority on a four level city-wide priority scale. Rates of public assistance are low in the Development Area as a whole, with only 0.6 per cent of the population receiving some type of public assistance.

At present the Clarence Darrow Community Center in Garfield Ridge and eight Board of Education social centers at public schools are the only community centers available to residents of the Far Southwest. More facilities serving a wide range of age groups and offering a variety of programs are needed.

The percentages of people over 65 in the Archer Heights, Brighton Park, and Gage Park community areas are above the city average of 9.8 per cent. Facilities and programs designed to recognize the talents of this age group and to meet their specialized needs in housing, recreation, medical care, and transportation are needed. A senior citizen group, the Golden Age Club of West Lawn Park, is sponsored by the Chicago Park District. Local social and community services and organizations are being developed but are not yet available in sufficient quality or quantity to serve this segment of the area's residents.

Increased community recreational facilities are also needed to serve the youth of the area. Juvenile delinquency rates declined between 1962 and 1965 from the previous three years except in West Lawn and Brighton Park which showed slight increases. Well structured community programs are needed to give the area's youth

an opportunity to participate in constructive group activity.

There is also a need to increase child day care facilities. The Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago's study, *Day Care for Children in Chicago*, identified Brighton Park, Clearing, and Garfield Ridge communities as having the greatest need for the care of children in the Far Southwest. The Welfare Council estimated that over 2500 children in the Far Southwest Development Area are in need of day care. At present the total capacity of day care centers in the area is only 87.

Two Infant Welfare Clinics of the Chicago Board of Health, located in Garfield Ridge and Gage Park, and a mobile unit run by the Planned Parenthood Association are also in the Development Area. In the northeast section of the area priority attention should be given to health care for the elderly and tuberculosis detection and care.

One private hospital, containing 88 beds, is located in the Development Area. The Hospital Planning Council for Metropolitan Chicago has recommended the enlargement and modernization of this hospital and cooperative planning by the hospitals in the southwestern portion of the city to respond to the increasing demand for local hospital care. The Misericordia Home in Brighton Park provides prenatal care for dependent mothers and custodial care for mentally retarded infants from three months to six years of age.

Thirteen of the State's mental health planning areas are located in Chicago south of Roosevelt Road and are associated with the John J. Madden Zone Center at Hines Hospital. Long-range plans call for the development of a community mental health center in each planning area. First priority will be given to areas with high indications of poverty and high rates of admission to state psychiatric institutions.

## Public Safety and Health

Agencies of city government have been playing broader and more positive roles in the fields of safety and health in recent years. The establishment of the Department of Air Pollution Control and the social and educational programs of the Police and Fire departments and the Board of Health reflect the growing concern with the environmental problems of large urban and industrial areas. These public programs emphasize the idea that the achievement of higher standards is the responsibility of all citizens.

The north central part of this Development Area is particularly affected by air pollution from sulphur dioxide and particulates produced from sources along the Sanitary and Ship Canal and industrial concentrations south of the Canal and the Stevenson Expressway. The cooperation and responsibility of citizens and industry is necessary for the solution of air pollution problems.

The total 1967 incidence of crime in the Development Area showed a decline from 1966, and the area ranked low on the scale of major crimes per thousand population in the city. Crime prevention necessitates both citizen cooperation and police sensitivity to the causes and conditions underlying criminal activity.

The Chicago Police Department Community Workshops are designed to better acquaint the community with the problems of public safety to obtain its aid and cooperation in crime prevention.

The current program of the Police Department, as recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan*, calls for the establishment of a new area headquarters complex just outside of the Development Area to serve the entire Far Southwest. The *Plan* also recommends the long range construction of three new fire stations and the elimination of two existing fire stations.

## Business

Archer Avenue, Kedzie Avenue, Pulaski Road, Cicero Avenue and 63rd Street are intensively developed commercial streets. These developed at a time when adjacent communities were dependent on shopping facilities in convenient walking distance. Changes in retail patterns and shopping habits have made much of the linear commercial development obsolescent. There is a general lack of adequate off-street loading and parking facilities.

The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends a city-wide pattern of business centers, reducing strip development. The clustering of businesses would release land along the major streets for residential and other community development. Clustering would also enable businesses to work together to provide off-street parking and to upgrade the physical appearance of the center.

Community business centers should provide adequate convenience goods shopping facilities and include the location of new public and private facilities such as library branches, recreation centers, social service agency offices, and health clinics.

By upgrading and concentrating the community business district located at 63rd Street and Central Avenue, both present businesses and local customers could be retained. The modern community shopping center located at 63rd Street and Narragansett Avenue is an excellent example of a clustered convenience shopping area offering adequate parking facilities.

A regional special service district to be improved is located in the vicinity of Cicero Avenue and Marquette Road. A center of this type would include areas for automobile sales, parcel handling, offices and entertainment. Special access drives and well-planned parking areas should be built to avoid congestion on adjacent major streets. The location of the Crosstown Expressway will increase the accessibility for a greater trade population to this center. A special service district at such a highly accessible location is also well suited for office development. The *Comprehensive Plan* also proposes that a new regional special service district be created in the northwest corner of the Archer Heights community area near Cicero Avenue and the Stevenson Expressway.

The Ford City regional business center is



Service commercial uses such as used car lots should be clustered in special service districts.

This row of stores is part of a still viable commercial strip which supports some specialty stores.



located in the Far Southwest Development Area. The center was built according to modern shopping center standards with a functional, clustered design and adequate off-street parking. It contains eighty-two stores including two department store branches and a number of restaurants. Bowling alleys and a theatre complement its regional attraction.

### Industry

Industry in the Far Southwest Development Area is contained in six districts located along major transportation facilities.

The South Branch industrial district is located on both sides of the Sanitary and Ship Canal. The quality of industrial establishments here ranges from fair to good. The district contains a mixture of distributive and processing industries. Manufacturing activities are increasing slightly, but bulk storage facilities use the largest amount of land. Access to rail, water and expressway facilities is excellent. Some problems exist with railroad crossings at grade, and some attention should be paid to the impact of industrial operations on nearby residential areas. Within the district a 120-acre area north of the Sanitary and Ship Canal at the Belt Line Railroad is identified in the *Comprehensive Plan* as a private initiative opportunity area. This area is at present vacant land available for general manufacturing development.

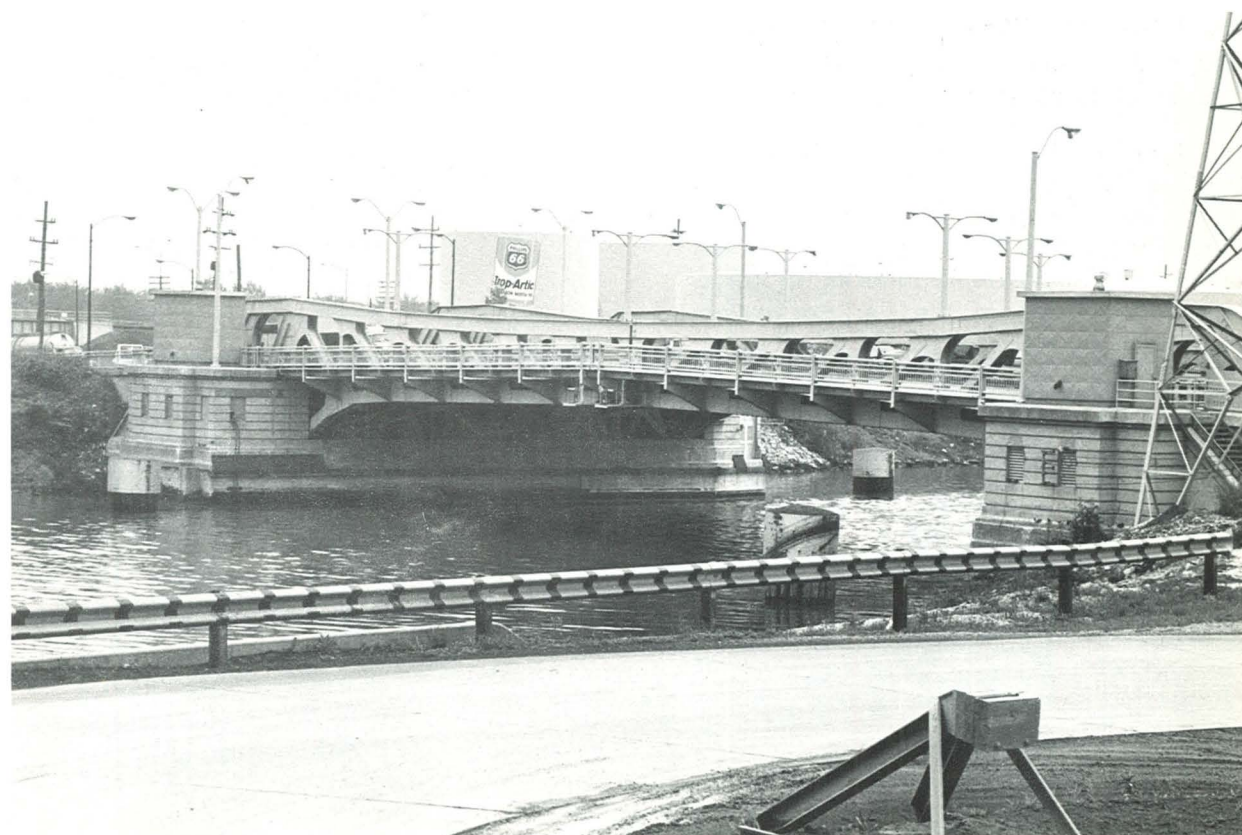
The Crane industrial district is located south of the Stevenson Expressway and east of Hamlin Avenue. This area is also identified by the *Comprehensive Plan* as a private initiative opportunity area for industry. The area is zoned for heavy industry and has excellent accessibility via the Stevenson Expressway and the Santa Fe piggyback terminal in the adjacent rail yards. Rezoning the area for restricted or general manufacturing capable of utilizing the excellent transportation facilities would create an industrial district more compatible with the surrounding residential areas.

The Crawford industrial district extends south from the Stevenson Expressway to 43rd and 47th streets between Hamlin and Cicero avenues, and southward along the Belt Line Railroad to 55th Street. The area contains primarily single-story buildings in good to excellent condition. Many plants have sites large enough for future expansion and development.



Ford City Shopping Center is a recently built regional center with a functional clustered design and adequate off-street parking.

While the industrial and transportation corridor formed by the Sanitary and Ship Canal, the Railroad and the Stevenson Expressway provides excellent sites for heavy manufacturing industry, much of the land is currently used for bulk storage.



The Kenwood manufacturing district is an elongated development flanking the Belt Line Railroad from Western to Keeler avenues. Industrial expansion in this area since 1930 has resulted in intensive development. The area has mixed light and heavy industry. Within an older portion of the area, between 47th and the Belt Line and Kedzie and Central Park avenues, the need for increased off-street loading ramps is evident.

The Ashburn industrial district is located at the southern end of the Development Area and is bounded on the north by the Belt Line rail yards. The area generates heavy vehicular traffic congesting Western, Pulaski, and Cicero avenues. The east-west leg of the proposed Crosstown Expressway, somewhere between 63rd and 75th streets as presently proposed, would greatly relieve the congestion on the streets adjacent to the Ashburn district.

Marquette Industrial Park, a relatively new development is located at the far western edge of the Development Area and is bounded by 59th and 63rd streets, Oak Park and Harlem avenues. It is zoned for restricted manufacturing and has numerous sites available for future development.

The major thrusts in improving the industrial districts in the Far Southwest Development Area should be toward separating industrial and residential land uses, increasing off-street loading and parking facilities, providing adequate transportation facilities to help reduce congestion on the major streets that serve the area, and relocating nuisance industries to areas such as the Lake Calumet heavy industry area.

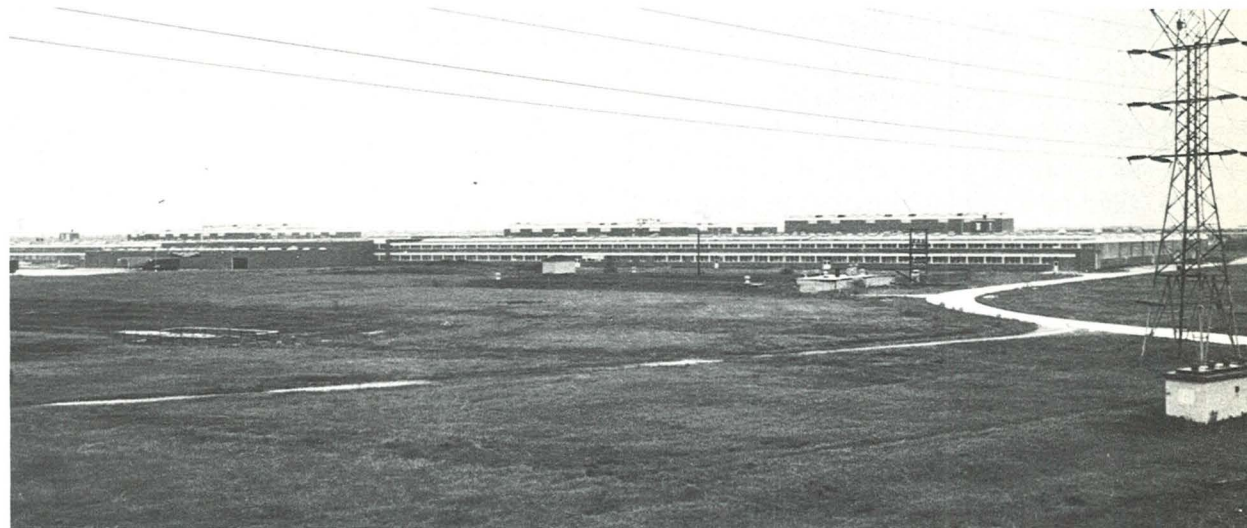
### Transportation

The *Comprehensive Plan* cites five major elements that form the framework for transportation planning in the Far Southwest Development Area:

1. The construction of the Crosstown Expressway;
2. The provision of public express transit facilities in the right-of-way of Western Avenue and the Stevenson and Crosstown expressways;
3. The development of an efficient system of major streets at mile intervals, supported by secondary streets at half mile intervals;
4. The consolidation of rail freight facilities and yards and the elimination of railroad crossings at grade;



Problems of traffic congestion, inadequate loading facilities and lack of expansion space affect some older industrial districts.



The Far Southwest contains some large tracts of vacant land which offer opportunities for industrial development.

5. The continued expansion and improvement of facilities for passengers and freight handling at Midway Airport.

The Crosstown Expressway is planned as the last major element in the expressway network for Chicago, and plans for the initial three and one-half mile section have been released. They show that the first segment of the Crosstown will be constructed between the Stevenson Expressway and 67th Street with traffic interchanges at the Stevenson Expressway, 47th Street, 55th Street, Midway Airport, and 63rd Street.

This segment will take the form of two depressed roadways, one at Cicero Avenue and the other next to the Belt Line Railroad. It will provide a direct expressway connection via the Stevenson Expressway between the airport and the central business district.

The Crosstown corridor will include provisions for public express transit service. This service will also be provided in the Stevenson and Western Avenue corridors of high accessibility. These three corridors will give the Development Area a high level of accessibility to all parts of the city and metropolitan area.

Major streets at one mile intervals will carry the bulk of the area's through traffic. Half-mile streets will carry public transportation service and collect and distribute traffic between major streets and local streets keeping the neighborhood streets free from through traffic. The following streets in the Far Southwest Development Area are recommended for upgrading to major street status in the *Comprehensive Plan*: 31st Street, Pershing Road, 47th Street, 55th Street, 63rd Street, 71st Street, Western Avenue, Kedzie Avenue, Pulaski Road, Central Avenue, Narragansett Avenue and Harlem Avenue.

The proper functioning of the major east-west streets intersecting with the Crosstown must also be considered part of the area's transportation planning framework.

While Archer Avenue once served as a through route for traffic going to or coming from the Loop, the Stevenson Expressway has taken over much of its function as a major traffic carrier. The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends that diagonal streets be de-emphasized because they often cause traffic congestion and travel delays where they intersect with the major street system. As the major street grid system is developed and as strip commercial facilities are relocated into commercial clusters, Archer Avenue should be de-emphasized as a major thoroughfare.

Heavy truck traffic through residential areas is generated along 63rd and 65th streets as well as Central and Austin avenues by the large concentration of industries in the Clearing District just south of the city limits. It would be in the city's interest to encourage the development of an internal east-west distributor for the Clearing Industrial District to link directly with Marquette Road at the Crosstown Expressway.

Eight railroads have extensive land holdings in the Far Southwest Development Area. Long-range objectives should include consolidation of rail functions to free as much of this land as possible for redevelopment and re-use. The trend toward railroad mergers will create opportunities for achieving this objective. Railroad lines cutting across the Far Southwest at grade present safety hazards to pedestrians and vehicles and create major barriers to the movement of both pedestrian and motor traffic. Intersections should be redesigned to allow a

freer and safer traffic flow for each mode of transportation.

The facilities at Midway Airport are to be renewed and developed to accommodate the rapid growth of air freight services and to handle the expected cargo overflow from O'Hare Field. Recent improvements at Midway include terminal expansion and rehabilitation and reconstruction of runways.

With the increase and improvement of air service at Midway Airport and the development of the Crosstown Expressway, industrial and commercial activities around the airport can be expected to increase. Special attention should be paid to the relationship between these activities and the major transportation elements in the area.

Some of the extensive rail yards in the Far Southwest Development Area have been modernized to accommodate piggyback facilities and are heavily used. Others are under-used and future consolidation of rail services should free them for redevelopment.



The section of Western Avenue in the Far Southwest Development Area is part of the boulevard system. This segment of the system also coincides with the city's major street pattern and an express transit link is planned in this alignment.

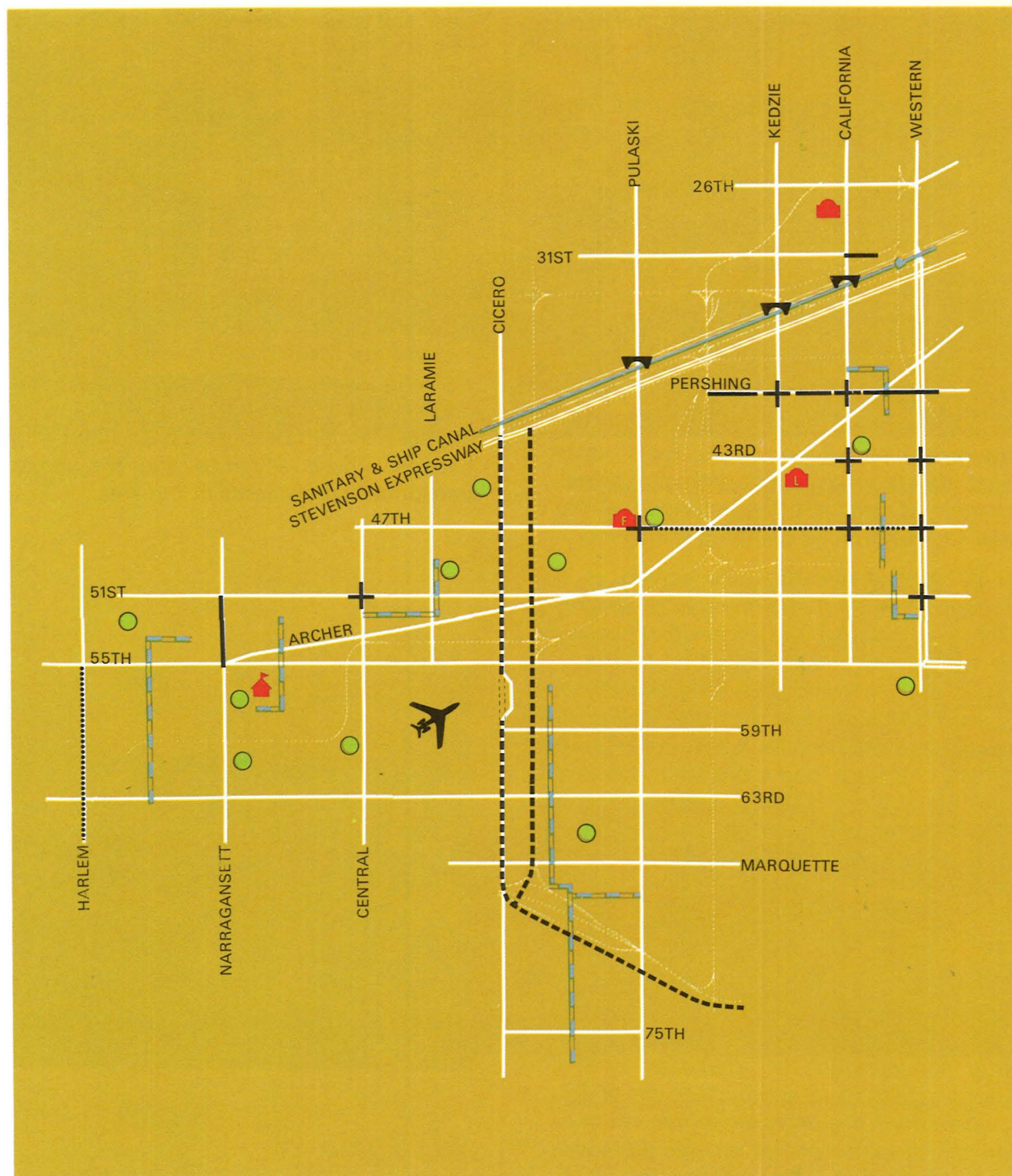


## Major Capital Improvements in The Far Southwest Development Area

The map illustrates major projects included in the 1967-1971 *Joint Capital Improvements Program*, as well as a number of additional projects scheduled since completion of the report. The Capital Improvements Program covers a five-year period and is revised annually and submitted to the Chicago Plan Commission for approval. The Plan Commission, under the inter-agency planning referral procedure, also reviews each project prior to construction to insure that projects are in conformity with *The Comprehensive Plan of Chicago*.

The projects identified on the map are at three different stages of development: projects recently completed, projects underway, and projects proposed within the next five years. Some area-wide projects, such as the recently completed comprehensive alley lighting program, are not mapped.

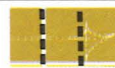
There is a major study currently underway in the Far Southwest Development Area involving a street improvement on Pershing Road from S. Lake Shore Drive to the city limits. In addition, several public agencies have initiated city-wide development plans which will result in additional recommendations for improved public facilities and services in this area.



Bridge and Viaduct Improvement



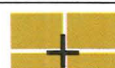
Crosstown Expressway



Street Improvement



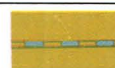
Intersection Improvement



Street Lighting



Sewer Improvement



Fire Station (New)



Public Library (New)



Public Building Improvement



Park Improvement



School Improvement



Airport Improvement



## Environmental Patterns in the Far Southwest Development Area

The accompanying illustrations show environmental patterns in the area around Kelly Park and suggest alternative ideas for future development in this sector of the Development Area.

Several recommendations are included in both alternatives. In accordance with the *Comprehensive Plan*, excessive land use mixture would be minimized. Industries which are incompatible with residential uses would be located within industrial districts. Businesses now in obsolete commercial strips or scattered throughout the area would be relocated to modern shopping centers. One major center is suggested for 43rd Street and Sacramento Avenue.

Mile and half-mile streets are to be improved and their traffic capacities increased. Archer Avenue, a diagonal street, would be discontinued between Pershing Road and 43rd Street. A new express transit line is proposed to follow a Western Avenue alignment.

Both alternatives suggest that recreation space be augmented by enlarging school-parks and by the creation of a linear park along the vacated Archer Avenue right-of-way.

Alternative A emphasizes industrial development while reducing residential land use somewhat. A large concentration of indus-

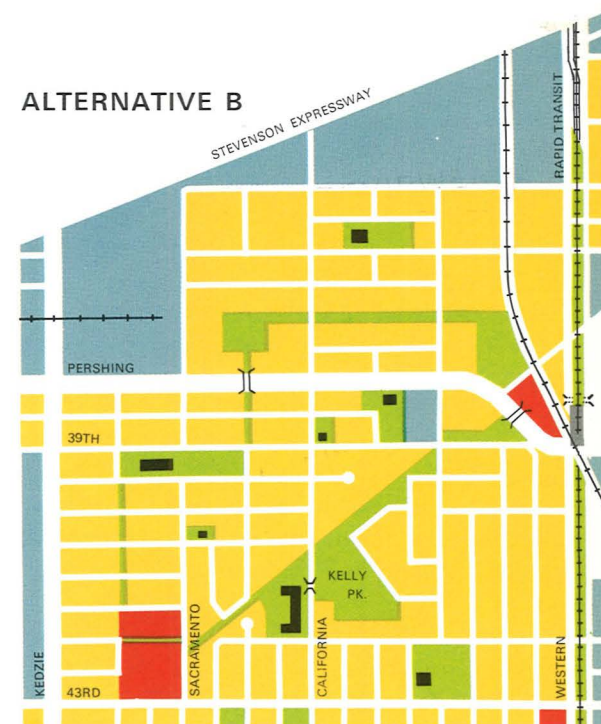
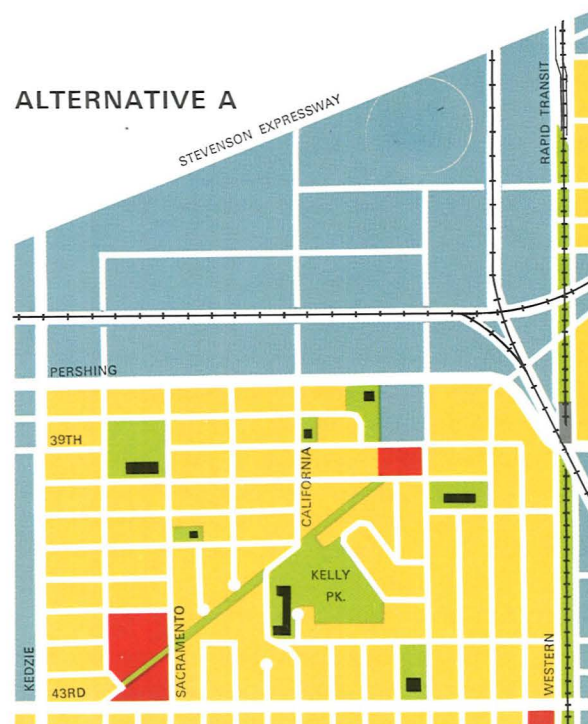
try between Pershing Road and the Stevenson Expressway would have the advantage of the high accessibility provided by the expressway, rail lines, and major streets. By curving California Avenue to by-pass Kelly Park and Kelly High School one block to the west, the high school would be provided with direct access to the park. This alternative involves minimum disruption to existing residential street patterns.

Alternative B, by contrast, proposes the resolution of land use in an increase in the area devoted to residential and community purposes. Industry would be confined to a smaller district north of 35th Street between Sacramento and Western avenues, and north of Pershing Road west of Sacramento Avenue.

This alternative provides for several new neighborhood parks which would be connected with school-parks, the Archer mall, and each other by means of greenways formed primarily by the closing of residential streets. Kelly Park would be linked with Kelly High School by means of a grade-

separated pedestrian walkway. The suggested mall system would increase pedestrian safety by grade-separation structures and by discouraging through traffic on residential streets.

As has been suggested in the purpose statement for this report, not all planning problems have clear or immediate solutions. In some cases questions are raised in expectation that the best solutions will evolve only through community discussion. The alternatives are intended to suggest two directions in which future development may be guided.



Residential

Institutions and Parks

Business

Industry

## Summary

The illustration opposite this summary is designed to present an overview of the major concepts identified through the Development Area process at this stage. This makes it possible to see how each of these ideas contribute to the total design for the Development Area:

**A.** Most of the older and more deteriorated housing is located in the northeastern portion of the Development Area. Rehabilitation and community maintenance programs should continue in the Gage Park, Archer Heights and Brighton Park communities. Where residential structures are removed new residential construction should conform to existing densities and mixes of housing type.

**B.** The communities in the central part of the Development Area should retain their present mixture of single-family and two-flat dwellings. The provision of community facilities—schools in particular—should have high priority.

**C.** Residential areas to the south and west of Midway Airport are generally well-maintained neighborhoods of single-family homes. The character and high standard of maintenance of these communities should continue.

**D.** Neighborhoods east of Pulaski Road are particularly in need of recreation space. Priority should be given to providing this area with park land suitable for both active and passive uses. In conjunction with major parks on the periphery of the Development Area—Marquette, McKinley and Gage parks—some pedestrian walkways and landscaped greenways might be provided within the Far Southwest to make these major park facilities more accessible.

**E.** Deteriorated and vacant commercial establishments along major streets should be removed, and other businesses and needed community facilities

encouraged to relocate into modern shopping centers with attractive premises and adequate off-street parking.






**F.** The industrial areas in the Far Southwest are generally in good condition. The most pressing problems are the provision of adequate off-street parking and loading facilities and the elimination of truck traffic from residential streets. Most industries are located in districts, but efforts should be made to relocate those industrial operations that create serious problems in residential areas.

**G.** Mile and half-mile streets are to be upgraded to major and secondary street standards as recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan*. This program will help to eliminate through traffic, and particularly truck traffic, from the residential neighborhoods. Public transit will run along the mile and half-mile streets, providing service within one-fourth mile of every residence, as recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

**H.** The initial segment of the Crosstown Expressway will run from the Stevenson Expressway to 67th Street. The 3½-mile split alignment will involve two depressed roadways with interchanges at the Stevenson Expressway, 47th Street, 55th Street, Midway Airport, and 63rd Street. The tree-lined parallel alignments along Cicero Avenue and the Belt Line railroad will make it possible to create orderly sites for business, industry, institutions and housing in close proximity.

The continuing modernization of the physical plant that supports community services is illustrated in the Capital Improvements section of this report. In every area of community service—recreation, education, public safety, environmental health, and social services—program improvements that are tailored to meet the needs of people must also continue. In the Far Southwest Development Area, such improvements should emphasize stronger supportive services for presently disadvantaged groups.

## Planning Framework Far Southwest Development Area

Residential	
Business	
Institutional	
Park	
Industrial	

**A.** Community Maintenance and Rehabilitation

**B.** Community Maintenance and Provision of Community Facilities

**C.** Community Maintenance

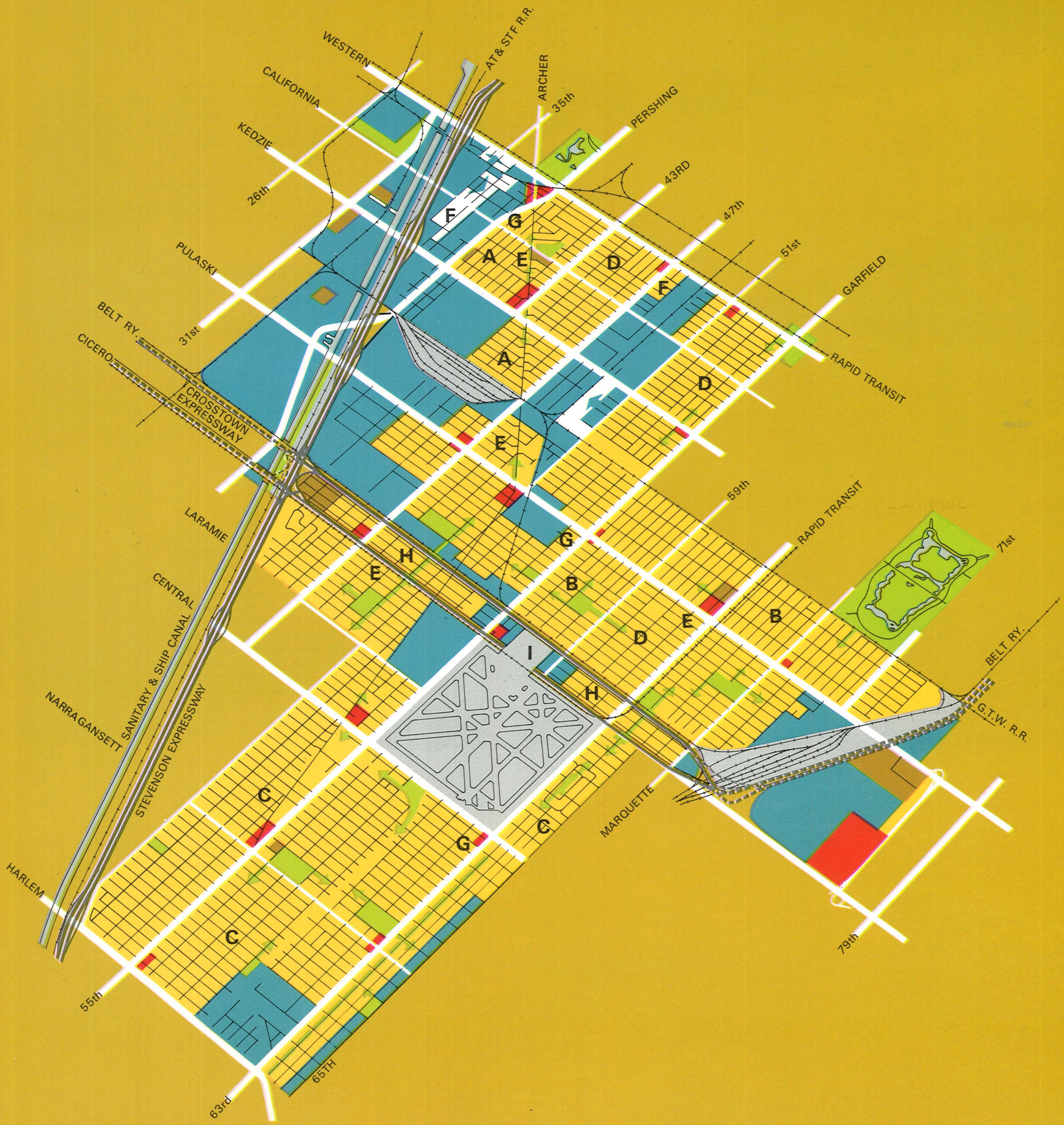
**D.** Recreation and Open Space Additions

**E.** Commercial Consolidation and Renewal

**F.** Industrial Improvements

**G.** Major Streets Improvements

**H.** Crosstown Corridor



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